

A woman with long, dark, wavy hair is lying down, looking upwards with a joyful expression, her mouth open in a wide smile. She is wearing a red, lacy, strapless top. A large, dark-colored snake is coiled around her neck and shoulder. The background is a warm, orange-toned, textured surface.

Oh PhaRO

COMICS - DEPOT

Giving you, what the others will not



VAMPi

ANARCHY
STUDIOS
#20

LAU
CONWAY
TAM





VAMPI™

SERPENT'S KISS

PART TWO

DAVID CONWAY STORY
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WHAT HAS COME BEFORE

Following the astounding revelation of her genetic origin, Vampi hits the road to try and dig up some more about the Draconians. Xenocide stays behind, still after revenge for the loss of her life as it could have been. Vampi is more focused: she's done what she could here, it's time to move on and see what else she can learn.

She knows the basics: her former ally and friend, Jacob Jones, participated in a grand experiment attempting to create a



breed of advanced humans splicing in the dragon's genes. Vampi might not like it, but for the first time in her memory, she has some answers. But to her, the only open more questions.

She cycles her way to Mexico City, where the legends of the Chupacabra pique her curiosity. Maybe they are real, and maybe there's a connection.

What she doesn't know about this new land is that the "ruling class" is a class above. Aurelius and Aurora Valusian have started molding the city in their own image. And it's that image that will have a great impact on Vampi.

She keeps to the countryside, believing it to be the safest route, but there something sinister in the woods. And, of course, there's that mysterious shadow that's been following her for so long, and it's now come out of the shadows...



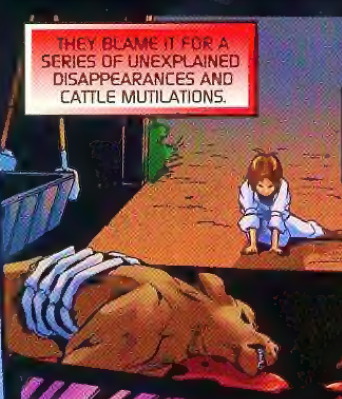


SANTA SANGRE,
OUTSIDE MEXICO CITY.

I CAME HERE LOOKING
FOR ANSWERS—
AND FOUND THIS.



THE LOCALS CALL IT
THE CHUPACABRA--




THEY BLAME IT FOR A
SERIES OF UNEXPLAINED
DISAPPEARANCES AND
CATTLE MUTILATIONS.

AND EVEN IF I
HADN'T SEEN
THE EVIDENCE
FOR MYSELF--

-- A BLOODSUCKING
MONSTER, IF NOT EXACTLY
EVERYONE'S IDEA OF
A CLASSIC VAMPIRE.



-- I CAN SMELL IT
ON HIS BREATH.



BUT IF HE THINKS
I'M NEXT ON THE
MENU, HE'S IN
FOR A SURPRISE.



HE'S NOT THE ONLY
BLOODSUCKER
'ROUND HERE NOW.



AND HE DEFINITELY
WASN'T EXPECTING THAT.

OR THIS!



HOLY --



HE SHOULD
HAVE LOST
THAT ARM.



IT FEELS LIKE I'VE
BEEN HIT BY A
FREIGHT TRAIN.



WHATEVER HE IS,
HE'S ONE TOUGH
SON OF A BITCH.

WE MIGHT SHARE
A TASTE FOR BLOOD--

INITIATE
VOICE RECOGNITION
SYSTEM ...

-- BUT ANY SIMILARITIES
BETWEEN US END THERE--
HE SEEMS PRACTICALLY
INDESTRUCTIBLE.

MAYBE I CAN'T
STOP HIM THE OLD-
FASHIONED WAY --

-- BUT I'VE GOT SOME
NEW TRICKS UP MY
SLEEVE THIS TIME.

AUTO-REMOTE
TARGETING
FUNCTION.

SELECT
ANTI-PERSONNEL
MORTAR...

NOW!


I HAVEN'T HAD A
CHANCE TO TEST THE
BIKE'S ONBOARD
WEAPONS SYSTEM--




AND THIS SEEMS
LIKE THE IDEAL
OPPORTUNITY.



NOT EXACTLY A
DIRECT HIT - BUT
CLOSE ENOUGH.



NOT BAD--
CONSIDERING I'VE
NEVER BEEN MUCH OF
A COMPUTER
NERD.



GUESS I'LL
NEVER FIND OUT THE
TRUTH ABOUT THAT
THING NOW,
THOUGH.

WHATEVER
IT WAS.



A MUTANT.



IT WAS
PROBABLY A
MUTANT.

EVERYONE
KNOWS THE CHUPACABRA
ISN'T REAL. BUT WHAT ELSE
WOULD YOU CALL IT-- OR
ANY OF THE OTHER
MONSTERS?

MUTANTS?
OTHER
MONSTERS?

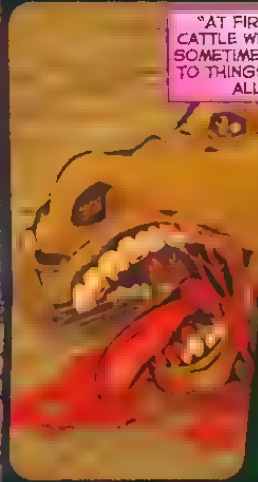
YOU MEAN
THERE'S MORE
LIKE THAT
ONE?

WHERE THE
HELL DO THEY
COME FROM?


FROM HELL?
THAT'S WHAT SOME
OF THE OLD
PEOPLE SAID.

WE MIGHT
BE POOR, BUT
WE'RE NOT IGNORANT
PEASANTS.

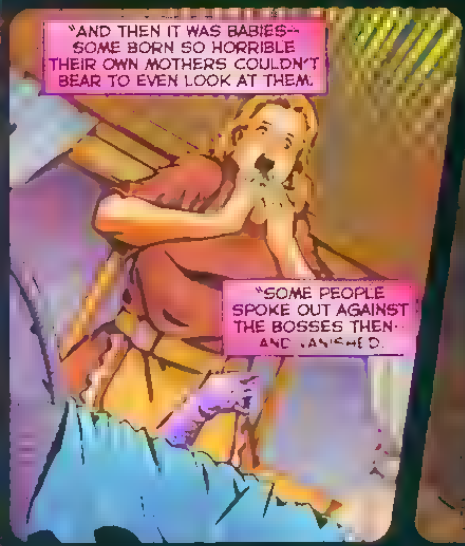
WE KNOW THAT
THE CHEMICALS AND
RADIOACTIVE WASTE THAT
POLLUTE THIS WHOLE
AREA CAN CAUSE
MUTATIONS.



"AT FIRST ONLY THE
CATTLE WERE AFFECTED,
SOMETIMES GIVING BIRTH
TO THINGS THAT WERE...
ALL WRONG.




"BUT NOBODY
SPOKE UP-- THEY
WERE TOO AFRAID OF
LOSING THEIR JOBS
IN THE FACTORIES.



"AND THEN IT WAS BABIES--
SOME BORN SO HORRIBLE
THEIR OWN MOTHERS COULDN'T
BEAR TO EVEN LOOK AT THEM.

"SOME PEOPLE
SPOKE OUT AGAINST
THE BOSSES THEN--
AND VANISHED.

BUT NO ONE
WAS SAFE.



"AFTER EVERYTHING
ELSE, THE DISAPPEARANCES
WERE THE LAST STRAW.

BUT BY THE TIME WE
MADE A STAND IT WAS
ALREADY TOO LATE

AT THE FIRST SIGHTING
WE'RE HEARD, DANA
SAID SHE WAS HALED
BEFORE WE WERE HALED
TO THE MARCH.

I NEVER AID
DANA
WAS ALONG

THEY WERE ALL SCARED
FROM US, BUT IN THE END, WE
WENT TO THE CHURCH TO

FOR WHAT
HAPPENS
TO THEM.

BECAUSE NO ONE
EVER GETS ON

...HAPPENING. IT'S GOT TO DO
WITH WHAT THEY'RE DOING
IN THOSE FACTORIES."

COULDN'T
WAIT TO FIND OUT
THE TRUTH.

TO SEE
WHAT WE WERE
ACTUALLY DOING
HERE.

"COULD
YOU, SENOR
MORALES?"

OR MAY
I CALL YOU
JUAN?

AFTER ALL
THE MOST INTIMATE
EXPERIENCE TWO
PEOPLE CAN SHARE
IS DEATH.

SO WE
SHOULD AT LEAST
BE ON FIRST NAME
TERMS, DON'T
YOU THINK?

AURELIUS,
YOU MAD, DAMNED
SON-OF-A-BITCH!

I'M THE
INTERIOR MINISTER—
YOU'LL NEVER GET
AWAY WITH THIS.

GLAD TO SEE
YOU'RE GETTING INTO
THE SPIRIT OF THINGS, JUAN:
'MR. VALUSIAN' SEEMS A
TAD FORMAL UNDER THE
CIRCUMSTANCES.


AND I ALREADY
'GOT AWAY WITH IT'—
WHO'S GOING TO
SAVE YOU?

THE PEOPLE
WILL DEMAND
TO KNOW THE
TRUTH.

THE PEOPLE
—DEAR, YOU SOUND
SO NAÏVE, JUAN.

THE DEVIL
BOUGHT THEIR SOULS
WITH PROMISES OF
LIMITLESS WEALTH AND
IMMORTALITY.

—NOW, ALL
I HAVE TO DO IS
OFFER THEM A
JOB.



AND THE
PROTESTORS YOU
SUPPORT WILL BE BLAMED
FOR YOUR ABDUCTION AND
ASSASSINATION.


BUT BEFORE
YOU DIE, JUAN, I'LL
SHOW YOU WHAT WE'VE
ACHIEVED HERE.

MY COLLEAGUE,
DR ANGER, INFORMS ME
THAT WE'VE CREATED AND
CONTAINED NOTHING LESS THAN THE
PRIMAL ENERGY OF THE COSMOS:
THE POWER THAT SEEDS
OUR SUN AND ALL THE
CONSTELLATIONS.

THE AZTECS
SAW THIS DIVINE POWER
PERSONIFIED IN THEIR SUPREME
BEING, QUETZALCOATL, THE
FEATHERED SERPENT.




THEY
SACRIFICED
THE BLOOD
OF PRINCES
TO IT.



SO, AS
A MERE INTERIOR
MINISTER, YOU SHOULD
FEEL PRIVILEGED.




ISN'T IT
BEAUTIFUL?



IT SEEMS
DE GUZMAN WAS
RIGHT ABOUT YOU,
JUAN.

YOU DIDN'T
GO QUIETLY,
DID YOU?

OF COURSE,
I REALIZE THAT
YOUR SUCCESSOR
IS A CORRUPT
WEAKLING.



BUT OUR
ORGANIZATION
ALWAYS NEEDS
NEW BLOOD--

ESPECIALLY THOSE
WHO AREN'T AVERSE
TO SPILLING IT

SO THIS
IS THE PLACE,
HUH?

THEY'RE NOT
EXACTLY ROLLING OUT
THE WELCOME MAT, BUT
IT LOOKS NORMAL
ENOUGH.

DON'T YOU KNOW
WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT
APPEARANCES?

THE VALUSIANS
HAVE CONNED ALMOST
EVERYONE.

"THEIR SUPPORTERS
WORSHIP THEM LIKE GODS"

ALL THAT
MIGHT BE TRUE
BUT THIS IS AL-
NEWS TO ME

AND, IF YOU'RE
SUGGESTING WE JUST
BUST IN THERE, IT'LL BE
A PRETTY TALL ORDER WITH
ALL THE SECURITY
THEY'VE GOT.

AN
INQUISITIVE
PERSON

OK,
SOMETHING
A LITTLE MORE
INTERESTING
PERHAPS.

EITHER WAY,
IT WARRANTS
INVESTIGATION.

TONIGHT'S
SCHEDULED
BLOODSHED WILL
HAVE TO BE
POSTPONED.

THAT SIREN
MEANS WE HAVE
AN INTRUDER,
GENTLEMEN.

IN THE
INTERESTS OF
SECURITY WE MUST
BRIEFLY ADJOURN
THE RITUAL'S
COMPLETION...

UNTIL THE PROBLEM
HAS BEEN ELIMINATED

BUT, BE
ASSURED
YOUR REPRIEVE IS
STRICTLY
TEMPORARY.

BECAUSE
ALL WHO TRESPASS
HERE HAVE ONE THING
IN COMMON...

HOLD
IT RIGHT
THERE!

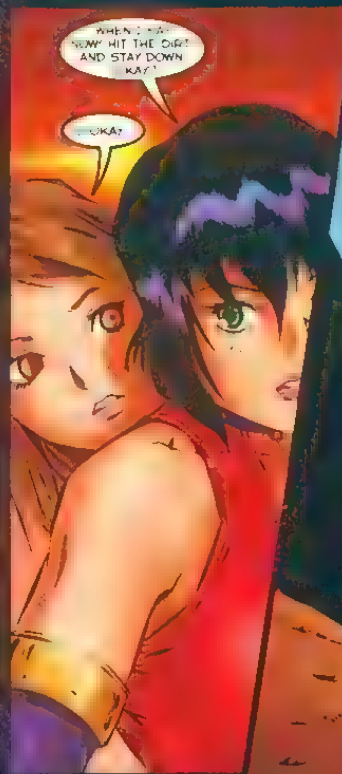
A SEVERELY
LIMITED
LIFESPAN

YOU CAN
GO OUT IN A
BLAZE OF
GLORY RIGHT
NOW.



...OR YOU
CAN GRAB SOME
AIR.

YOUR
CALL.



...OKAY?



ALMOST
BE A SHAME
TO KILL YOU.

AT LEAST
NOT UNTIL WE'VE
HAD SOME FUN.



NICE
BIKE, TOO.

YEAH.
WANT TO
SEE WHAT IT
CAN DO?

AND IN HIS CASE
THERE'S NO ALTERNATIVE—
HE'S GONNA DIE.

"NOTHING LIKE A LITTLE
GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE TO
BRIGHTEN THE LONG,
WINTER EVENINGS, DON'T
YOU AGREE, DARLING?"

ABSOLUTELY.

TO BE HONEST,
I WAS A LITTLE MIFFED
WHEN YOU HAD US ABANDON
THE RITUAL SO ABRUPTLY.
BUT NOW I CAN
SEE WHY.

WRESTLE
ISN'T SHE

I WONDER
WHAT SHE IS.

CERTAINLY
NOT A LOCAL.

"ONE OF THESE MEN
WAS A FUGITIVE.
USE THE POLYMERASE."

NO MORE
NO MORE



I'M NOT JUST
OUTNUMBERED
BY OUTNUMBERED

BUT FIREPOWER

—COMPARED TO
THE ELEMENT OF
SURPRISE

BUT I'M STILL ON
THE DEFENSIVE
FIGHTING WITH KID
REALLY


WHILE THEY
SHOOT TO KILL.



I'M OUT OF PLASTIC BULLETS NOW. IF I WANTED TO KILL THESE CREEPS, A COUPLE OF MORTARS WOULD TAKE CARE OF THEM--



--BUT NOT THAT CHOPPER ON MY TAIL.



IT'S ONLY A QUESTION OF WHICH OF THEM NAILS ME FIRST.



SO I'VE GOT TWO CHOICES HERE:



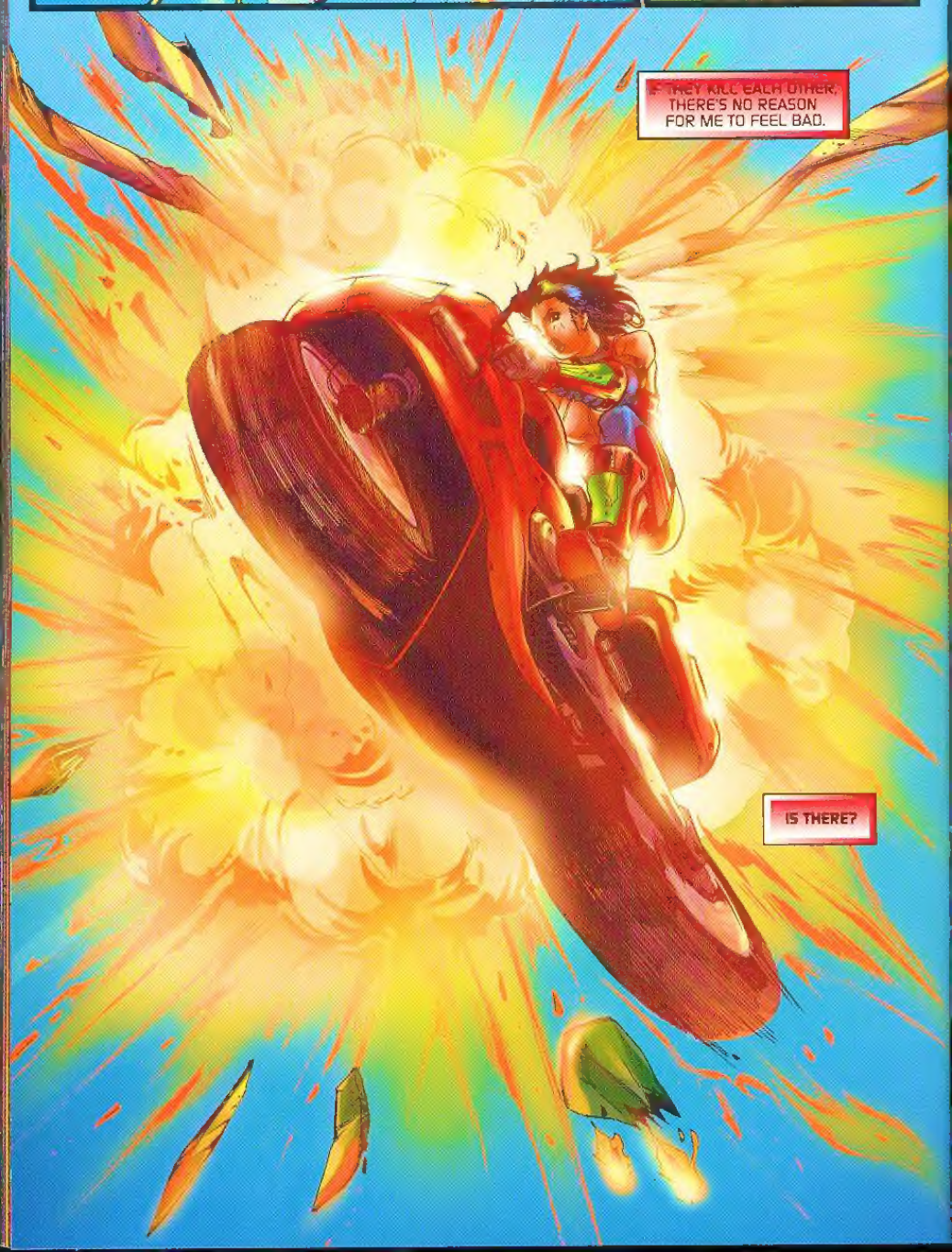
EITHER I KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE --



-- OR THEY DO.



MAYBE THIS WAY
MY CONSCIENCE IS
A LITTLE CLEARER.



IF THEY KILL EACH OTHER,
THERE'S NO REASON
FOR ME TO FEEL BAD.

IS THERE?



THAT WAS...
INCREDIBLE.
BUT I
HAVE TO
ASK...

I'VE BEEN
WONDERING ABOUT
THAT MYSELF LATELY.
KIND OF WHAT BROUGHT
ME HERE IN THE
FIRST PLACE.

EVERYONE
CALLS ME
VAMPI.

I GUESS
THAT'LL HAVE
TO DO FOR
NOW, KID.

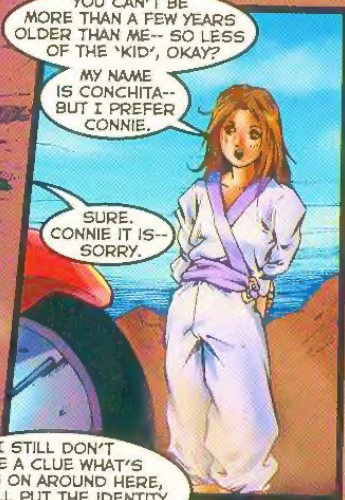
WHAT
ARE YOU?


YOU CAN'T BE
MORE THAN A FEW YEARS
OLDER THAN ME-- SO LESS
OF THE 'KID', OKAY?

MY NAME
IS CONCHITA--
BUT I PREFER
CONNIE.


SURE.
CONNIE IT IS--
SORRY.

I STILL DON'T
HAVE A CLUE WHAT'S
GOING ON AROUND HERE,
BUT I'LL PUT THE IDENTITY
CRISIS ON HOLD 'TIL
I FIND OUT.






--AND IT'S PROBABLY BEST IF YOU DON'T TAG ALONG.



WHERE AM I SUPPOSED TO GO?



YOU THINK IT'S SAFE TO GO BACK TO SANTA SANGRE?


AND, BESIDES, YOU SAID IT YOURSELF-- YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.

BUT I DO.


YOU NEED ME.

I GUESS YOU'VE GOT A POINT.

STILL, DON'T YOU HAVE ANY FAMILY OR ANYTHING?



I'VE GOT NO FAMILY... YOU?




THAT'S, UH... COMPLICATED.

LET'S JUST SAY I THOUGHT I MIGHT FIND SOME HERE.

HOW TRAGIC-- A PAIR OF WAIFS ALL ALONE IN THE BIG BAD WORLD.

WHY, IT'S ALMOST LIKE A BEDTIME STORY.

A GRIM FAIRYTALE, AURORA?



BUT IF VAMPI IS LOOKING FOR FAMILY, PERHAPS HER STORY WILL HAVE A HAPPY EVER AFTER ENDING, AFTER ALL.

TO BE CONTINUED.